

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

FEBRUARY 16, 2005

PRESENT: Rick Cleary, Laura Sherman, Eric Santini, and Anna Sanko

ABSENT: John Luginbuhl and Tim Olmsted

STAFF

PRESENT: Reanna Goodreau, Recording Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Cleary called the Economic Development Commission meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

By consensus, the commission agreed to go out of agenda order.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

4. Farm Initiatives—Update

Peter Charter stated that if the Town wanted to assist farmers that want to continue to farm, it would be better if there were an enhancement program, rather than the Town purchasing development rights. He explained that an enhancement program is basically a grant given to farmers who are looking to add buildings or equipment to their operations. The State has an enhancement program, but Mr. Charter stated that the money is often expended before most farmers get a chance to ask for that money.

The commission acknowledged that in order to help preserve farms in Ellington, a combination of both the purchase of development rights and the implementation of an enhancement program is important.

III. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion regarding Farmers Market at Brookside Park

Chairman Cleary stated that the First Selectman is planning to have a farmers' market at Brookside Park. He explained that the commission is investigating the cost of a tent for the market and is looking to gather a list of local farmers in order to contact them and see if they would be interested in participating in the market.

Peter Charter suggested contacting the Department of Agriculture for a list of Ellington and other local farmers. He explained that they have a staff person who coordinates the Connecticut Grown program, who could help in setting up this market.

Commissioner Sanko suggested putting together a checklist of questions and information when calling the farmers. Chairman Cleary stated that he would draft a checklist for the March meeting. Commissioner Sanko said that she would contact a friend who ran a farmer's market to do some research and possibly have him attend the March meeting. Commissioner Sherman stated that she would contact the Department of Agriculture for a list of farms in and around Ellington.

The commission returned to original agenda order.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

1. Business Survey—Update

Reanna Goodreau explained that she e-mailed the Secretary of State's Office to see if they could provide a digital listing of businesses that are registered with the State. She has not received a response and will follow up. If she can obtain that list, she will obtain a hardcopy list of the trade names from the Town Clerk's Office.

Chairman Cleary asked that if she could not get that information, if she would use the Assessor's personal property list to do the mailing for the business survey.

2. CEDAS: Camera Friendly Communities—Update

Commissioner Sanko stated that she would like to do a presentation for the EDC regarding the Camera Friendly Communities for the April meeting. She explained that this spring, pictures will need to be taken in order to start a portfolio.

3. Tax Abatement Policies/Procedures—Update

Reanna Goodreau explained that the Town Planner requested that the EDC review his memo dated 12/15/04 and request that the Board of Selectmen consider updating the tax abatement policy to include provisions for compliance and enforcement. Chairman Cleary stated that once he has received the statutes that the Town Attorney sent, he would draft the changes to the policy and then go before the BOS with a draft updated policy.

Chairman Cleary explained the problems that have occurred with the abatements that have been approved.

4. Review of the Economic Development Chapter of the Current Plan of Conservation & Development

Chairman Cleary stated that the Planning & Zoning Commission is putting \$75,000 in their budget for the Plan of Conservation & Development and another \$75,000 in their budget for

regulation amendments. He noted that since there is no money in the budget at the present time to do changes, the EDC has time to review the Economic Development chapter of the Plan. The commission reviewed the chapter and determined that they would continue to review and draft changes at upcoming meetings.

V. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. Approval of the January 12, 2005 Meeting Minutes

MOVED (SANTINI), SECONDED (SANKO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 12, 2005 MEETING MINUTES.

2. Correspondence:
 - a. Letter to Russ Boehle from Dennis Milanovich, dated 1/24/05
 - b. Memo to Land Use Commissions from Matt Davis, dated 1/28/05
 - c. Memo to EDC from Matt Davis, dated 2/9/05

Chairman Cleary noted that the EDC has recommended to the Design Review Board that they should consider using the Town of Glastonbury zoning regulations for their reviews. He reiterated that incorporating design guidelines into the zoning regulations is the only way to require design criteria. He stated that they may discuss this further at the March meeting.

- d. LULA Steering Committee email

SO NOTED.

MOVED (SHERMAN), SECONDED (SANTINI) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADD TO THE AGENDA: BOARD OF FINANCE'S DISCUSSION WITH THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGARDING THEIR REQUEST FOR OPEN SPACE FUNDING.

Chairman Cleary stated that the Board of Finance had the Conservation Commission members attend their last meeting to discuss the Commission's request for open space funding. He explained that the BOF is considering a referendum for a \$2 million bond for open space purchases. He noted that some BOF members did not believe this should happen until the open space plan is completed, while others thought it was worthwhile to secure the funding while the plan was being completed.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (SANKO) SECONDED (SANTINI) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Reanna Goodreau
Recording Secretary